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THE

ETHODIST EPISCOPALIAN;

OR,

E DOCTRINES, GENERAL RULES, AND SOME OTHER REGULATIONS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

. Origin of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

e preachers and members of our society in eral, being convinced that there was a great ciency of vital religion in the Church of land in America, and being in many places itute of the Christian sacraments, as sev- of the clergy had forsaken their Churches, ested the late Rev. John Wesley to take measures, in his wisdom and prudence, as ld afford them suitable relief in their distress.

In consequence of this, our venerable friend, who, under God, had been the father of the great revival of religion now extending over the earth, by the means of the Methodists, determined to ordain ministers for America; and for this purpose, in the year 1784, sent over three regularly ordained clergymen; but preferring the episcopal mode of Church government to any other, he solemnly set apart, by the imposition of his hands and prayer, one of them, namely, Thomas Coke, Doctor of Civil Law, late of Jesus College, in the University of Oxford, and a presbyter of the Church of England, for the episcopal office; and having delivered to him letters of episcopal orders, commissioned and directed him to set apart Francis Asbury, then general assistant of the Methodist Society in America, for the same episcopal office; he, the said Francis Asbury, being first ordained deacon and elder. In consequence of which, the said Francis Asbury was solemnly set apart for the said episcopal office by prayer, and the imposition of the hands of the said Thomas Coke, other regular-

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ly ordained ministers assisting in the sacred ceremony. At which time the General Conference, held at Baltimore, did unanimously receive the said Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury as their bishops, being fully satisfied of the validity of their episcopal ordination.*

II. Articles of Religion.†

1. *Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.*

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead, there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

2. *Of the Word, or Son of God, who was made very man.*

The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin; so that two whole and per-

* Discipline, Part I, chap. i, sec 1. † Ibid., sec. 2.

fect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men.

3. *Of the Resurrection of Christ.*

Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.

4. *Of the Holy Ghost.*

The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

5. *The Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation.*

The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not

read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scripture, we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.

The Names of the Canonical Books are

Genesis,
Exodus,
Leviticus,
Numbers,
Deuteronomy,
Joshua,
Judges,
Ruth,
The First Book of Samuel,
The Second Book of Samuel,
The First Book of Kings,
The Second Book of Kings,
The First Book of Chronicles,
The Second Book of Chronicles,
The Book of Ezra,

The Book of Nehemiah,
The Book of Esther,
The Book of Job,
The Psalms,
The Proverbs,
Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher,
Cantica, or Songs of Solomon,
Four Prophets the greater,
Twelve Prophets the less:

All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account canonical.

6. *Of the Old Testament.*

The Old Testament is not contrary to the New; for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man, being both God and man. Wherefore they are not to be heard who feign that the old fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the law given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts

thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth; yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral.

7. *Of Original or Birth Sin.*

Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk,) but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

8. *Of Free Will.*

The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.

9. *Of the Justification of Man.*

We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.

10. *Of Good Works.*

Although good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgments; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

11. *Of Works of Supererogation.*

Voluntary works, besides, over, and above God's commandments, which are called works of supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety. For by them men do declare that they do not only render unto God

much as they are bound to do, but that they do more for his sake than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly, When ye have done all that is commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

12. *Of Sin after Justification.*

Not every sin willingly committed after justification is the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore, the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after justification: after we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and, by the grace of God, rise again and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned who say they can no more sin as long as they live here, or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

13. *Of the Church.*

The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance,

in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

14. *Of Purgatory.*

The Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardon, worshiping, and adoration, as well of images as of relics, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but repugnant to the word of God.

15. *Of Speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the People understand.*

It is a thing plainly repugnant to the word of God, and the custom of the primitive Church, to have public prayer in the Church, or to minister the sacraments, in a tongue not understood by the people.

16. *Of the Sacraments.*

Sacraments, ordained of Christ, are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession; but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will toward us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only

quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him.

There are two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel; that is to say, Baptism and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called sacraments, that is to say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction, are not to be counted for sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have partly grown out of the *corrupt* following of the apostles; and partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures, but yet have not the like nature of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

The sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about; but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same, they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves condemnation, as St. Paul saith. 1 Cor. xi, 29.

17. *Of Baptism.*

Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth. The baptism of young children is to be retained in the Church.

18. *Of the Lord's Supper.*

The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; insomuch that, to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation, or the change of the substance of bread and wine in the Supper of our Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is faith.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshiped.

19. *Of both Kinds.*

The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people; for both the parts of the Lord's Supper, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be administered to all Christians alike.

20. *Of the one Oblation of Christ, finished upon the Cross.*

The offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in the which it is commonly said that the priest doth offer Christ for the

quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, is a blasphemous fable, and dangerous deceit.

21. *Of the Marriage of Ministers.*

The ministers of Christ are not commanded by God's law either to vow the estate of a single life, or to abstain from marriage: therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christians, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve best to godliness.

22. *Of the Rites and Ceremonies of Churches.*

It is not necessary that rites and ceremonies should in all places be the same, or exactly alike; for they have been always different, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely doth openly break the rites and ceremonies of the Church to which he belongs, which are not repugnant to the word of God, and are ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, that

others may fear to do the like, as one that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and woundeth the consciences of weak brethren.

Every particular Church may ordain, change, or abolish rites and ceremonies, so that all things may be done to edification.

23. *Of the Rules of the United States of America.*

The president, the congress, the general assemblies, the governors, and the councils of state, *as the delegates of the people*, are the rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the United States, and by the constitutions of their respective states. And the said states are a sovereign and independent nation, and ought not to be subject to any foreign jurisdiction.*

* As far as it respects civil affairs, we believe it the duty of Christians, and especially all Christian ministers, to be subject to the supreme authority of the country where they may reside, and to use all laudable means to

24. *Of Christian Men's Goods.*

The riches and goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same, as some do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

25. *Of a Christian Man's Oath.*

As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ and James his apostle; so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment, and truth.

enjoin obedience to the powers that be: and therefore it is expected that all our preachers and people, who may be under the British or any other government, will behave themselves as peaceable and orderly subjects.

III. The General Rules.*

The Nature, Design, and General Rules of our United Societies.

(1) In the latter end of the year 1739, eight or ten persons came to Mr. Wesley in London, who appeared to be deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for redemption. They desired (as did two or three more the next day) that he would spend some time with them in prayer, and advise them how to flee from the wrath to come; which they saw continually hanging over their heads. That he might have more time for this great work, he appointed a day when they might all come together; which from thenceforward they did every week, namely, on *Thursday*, in the evening. To these, and as many more as desired to join with them, (for their number increased daily,) he gave those advices from time to time which he judged most needful for them; and they always concluded their

* Discipline, Part I, chap. i, sec. 3–8,

meeting with prayer suited to their several necessities.

(2) This was the rise of the UNITED SOCIETY, first in *Europe*, and then in *America*. Such a society is no other than "*a company of men* having the form and seeking the power of *godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation.*"

(3) That it may the more easily be discerned whether they are indeed working out their own salvation, each society is divided into smaller companies, called classes, according to their respective places of abode. There are about twelve persons in a class, one of whom is styled the *leader*. It is his duty,

I. To see each person in his class once a week at least; in order,

1. To inquire how their souls prosper.

2. To advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort, as occasion may require.

3. To receive what they are willing to give

toward the relief of the preachers, Church, and poor.*

II. To meet the ministers and the stewards of the society once a week; in order,

1. To inform the minister of any that are sick, or of any that walk disorderly, and will not be reproved.

2. To pay the stewards what they have received of their several classes in the week preceding.

(4) There is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies, "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." But wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

First, By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced; such as,

*This part refers to towns and cities, where the poor are generally numerous, and Church expenses considerable.

The taking of the name of God in vain.

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work therein, or by buying or selling.

Drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, unless in cases of extreme necessity.

Slaveholding; buying or selling slaves.

Fighting, quarreling, brawling, brother going to law with brother; returning evil for evil; or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling.

The buying or selling goods that have not paid the duty.

The giving or taking things on usury, that is, unlawful interest.

Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation; particularly speaking evil of magistrates or of ministers.

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us.

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God; as,

The putting on of gold and costly apparel.

The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God.

Softness and needless self-indulgence.

Laying up treasure upon earth.

Borrowing without a probability of paying; or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

(5) It is expected of all who continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Secondly, By doing good; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men.

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison.

To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine,

that we are not to do good unless *our hearts be free to it.*"

By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others; buying one of another; helping each other in business; and so much the more because the world will love its own, and them *only.*

By all possible *diligence* and *frugality*, that the Gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race which is set before them, *denying themselves, and taking up their cross daily;* submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and off-scouring of the world; and looking that men should say *all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.*

(6) It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Thirdly, By attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are:

The public worship of God;

The ministry of the word, either read or expounded;

The Supper of the Lord;

Family and private prayer;

Searching the Scriptures;

Fasting or abstinence.

(7) These are the general rules of our societies; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his Spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. If here be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be known unto them who watch over that soul as they who must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways. We will bear with him for a season. But if then he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls.

Slavery.

We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of Slavery. We be-

lieve that the buying, selling, or holding of human beings, to be used as chattels, is contrary to the laws of God and nature, and inconsistent with the Golden Rule and with that Rule in our Discipline which requires all who desire to continue among us to "do no harm," and to "avoid evil of every kind." We therefore affectionately admonish all our Preachers and people to keep themselves pure from this great evil, and to seek its extirpation by all lawful and Christian means.

Baptism.

1. Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized, have the choice either of immersion, sprinkling, or pouring.

2. We will on no account whatever make a charge for administering baptism, or for burying the dead.

The Lord's Supper.

Let persons who have scruples concerning the receiving of the Lord's Supper kneeling, be permitted to receive it either standing or sitting.

No person shall be admitted to the Lord's Supper among us who is guilty of any practice for which we would exclude a member of our Church.

Rules relating to Marriage.

Many of our members have married with *unawakened* persons. This has produced bad effects; they have been either hindered for life, or have turned back to perdition.

To discourage such marriages, 1. Let every Preacher publicly enforce the Apostle's caution, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." 2 Cor. vi, 14. 2. Let all be exhorted to take no step in so weighty a matter without advising with the most serious of their brethren.

In general a woman ought not to marry without the consent of her parents. Yet there may be exceptions. For, if, 1. A woman believe it to be her duty to marry; if, 2. Her parents absolutely refuse to let her marry any Christian; then she may, nay, ought to marry with-

out their consent. Yet even then a Methodist preacher ought not to be married to her.

We do not prohibit our people from marrying persons who are not of our Church, provided such persons have the form, and are seeking the power, of godliness; but we are determined to discourage their marrying persons who do not come up to this description.

Concerning Dress.

We should by all means insist on the rules concerning dress. This is no time to encourage superfluity in dress. Therefore, let all our people be exhorted to conform to the spirit of the apostolic precept, not to adorn themselves "with gold, or pearls, or costly array." 1 Tim. ii, 9.

IV. The Membership of the Church.

Of receiving Members into the Church.

In order to prevent improper persons from insinuating themselves into the Church—

I. Let no one be received into the Church un-

til such person has been at least six months on trial, and has been recommended by the Leaders' and Stewards' Meeting, or, where no such meeting is held, by the Leader, and has been baptized; and who shall, on examination by the Minister in Charge before the Church, give satisfactory assurances both of the correctness of his faith and his willingness to observe and keep the rules of the Church.* Nevertheless, if a member in good standing in any other orthodox Church shall desire to unite with us, such applicant may, by giving satisfactory answers to the usual inquiries, be received at once into full fellowship.

II. Let none be admitted on trial except they are well recommended by one you know, or until they have met twice or thrice in class.

III. Read the Rules to them the first time they meet.

* Persons baptized in infancy must publicly assent, before the Church, to the Baptismal Covenant. The re-baptism of persons known to have been previously baptized is inconsistent with the nature and design of baptism as set forth in the New Testament.

That we may be more exact in receiving and excluding members, the Preacher in Charge shall, at every Quarterly Meeting, read the names of those that are received into the Church, and also of those that are excluded therefrom.

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*Form for Receiving Persons into the Church after Probation.**

Upon the day appointed, all that are to be received shall be called forward, and the Minister, addressing the congregation, shall say,

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN—The Scriptures teach us that the Church is the household of God, the body of which Christ is the Head, and that it is the design of the Gospel to bring together in one all who are in Christ. The fellowship of the Church is the communion that its members enjoy, one with another. The ends of this fellowship are, the maintenance of sound doctrine, and of the ordinances of Christian worship, and the exercise of that power of godly admonition and discipline which

* Discipline, Part IV, sec. 2.

Christ has committed to his Church for the promotion of holiness. It is the duty of all men to unite in this fellowship, for it is only those that "be planted in the house of the Lord that shall flourish in the courts of our God." Its more particular *duties* are, to promote peace and unity; to bear one another's burdens; to prevent each other's stumbling; to seek the intimacy of friendly society among themselves; to continue steadfast in the faith and worship of the Gospel; and to pray and sympathize with each other. Among its *privileges* are, peculiar incitements to holiness from the hearing of God's word and sharing in Christ's ordinances; the being placed under the watchful care of pastors, and the enjoyment of the blessings which are promised only to those who are of the household of faith Into this holy fellowship the persons before you, who have already received the sacrament of baptism and have been under the care of proper leaders for six months on trial, come seeking admission. We now propose, in the fear of God, to question them as to their faith

and purposes, that you may know that they are proper persons to be admitted into the Church.

Then addressing the applicants for admission, the Minister shall say:

Dearly beloved, you are come hither seeking the great privilege of union with the Church our Saviour has purchased with his own blood. We rejoice in the grace of God vouchsafed unto you in that he has called you to be his *followers*, and that thus far you have run well. You have heard how blessed are the privileges and how solemn are the duties of membership in Christ's Church; and before you are fully admitted thereto, it is proper that you do here publicly renew your vows, confess your faith, and declare your purpose, by answering the following questions:

Do you here, in the presence of God and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise contained in the baptismal covenant, ratifying and confirming the same, and acknowledging yourselves bound faithfully to observe and keep that covenant?

Ans. I do.

Have you saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?

Ans. I trust I have.

Do you believe in the doctrines of Holy Scripture, as set forth in the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church?

Ans. I do.

Will you cheerfully be governed by the rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church, hold sacred the ordinances of God, and endeavor, as much as in you lies, to promote the welfare of your brethren and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom?

Ans. I will.

Will you contribute of your earthly substance, according to your ability, to the support of the Gospel, and the various benevolent enterprises of the Church?

Ans. I will.

Then the Minister, addressing the Church, shall say:

Brethren, you have heard the responses given to our inquiries. Have any of you reason to

allege why these persons should not be received into full membership in the Church?

No objection being alleged, the Minister shall say to the candidates:

We welcome you to the communion of the Church of God; and in testimony of our Christian affection and the cordiality with which we receive you, I hereby extend to you the right hand of fellowship; and may God grant that you may be *a* faithful and useful *member* of the Church militant till you are called to the fellowship of the Church triumphant, which is "without fault before the throne of God."

Then shall the Minister offer extemporary prayer.

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*Trial of an Accused Member.**

An accused member shall be brought to trial before a committee of not less than five, who shall not be members of the Quarterly Conference, (and if the preacher judge it necessary, he may select the committee from any part of the district,) in the presence of the

* Discipline, Part III, chap. i, sec. 5.

preacher in charge, who shall preside in the trial, and cause exact minutes of the evidence and proceedings in the case to be taken. In the selection of the committee, the parties may challenge for cause.

If the accused person be found guilty by the decision of a majority of the committee, and the crime be such as is expressly forbidden by the word of God, sufficient to exclude a person from the kingdom of grace and glory, let the preacher in charge expel him.

If the accused person evade a trial, by absenting himself after sufficient notice given him, he may be tried in his absence, and if found guilty, he shall be expelled.

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*Relation of Baptized Children to the Church.**

We hold that all children, by virtue of the unconditioned benefits of the atonement, are members of the kingdom of God, and, therefore, graciously entitled to baptism; but infant baptism contemplates a course of relig-

* Discipline, Part I, chap. ii, sec. 2.

ious instruction and discipline, it is expected of all parents or guardians who present their children for baptism, that they use all diligence in bringing them up in conformity to the word of God, and they should be solemnly admonished of this obligation, and earnestly exhorted to faithfulness therein.

We regard all children who have been baptized as placed in visible covenant relation to God, and under the special care and supervision of the Church.

The preacher in charge shall preserve a full and accurate register of the names of all the baptized children within his pastoral care; the dates of their birth, baptism, their parentage, and places of residence.

The preacher in charge shall organize the baptized children of the Church at the age of ten years, or younger, into classes, and appoint suitable Leaders (male and female) whose duty it shall be to meet them in class once a week, and instruct them in the nature, design, and obligations of baptism, and the truths of religion necessary to make them "wise unto

salvation;" urge them to give regular attendance upon the means of grace; advise, exhort, and encourage them to an immediate consecration of their hearts and lives to God, and inquire into the state of their religious experience; *provided*, that the children unbaptized are not to be excluded from these classes.

Whenever baptized children shall have attained an age sufficient to understand the obligations of religion, and shall give evidence of piety, they may be admitted into full membership in our Church, on the recommendation of a Leader with whom they have met at least six months in class, by publicly assenting before the Church to the baptismal covenant, and also to the usual questions on doctrines and discipline.

Whenever a baptized child shall, by orphanage or otherwise, become deprived of Christian guardianship, the preacher in charge shall ascertain and report to the Leaders' and Stewards' Meeting the facts in the case; and such provision shall be made for the Christian training of the child as the circumstances of the case admit and require.

V. Means of Grace.*

Public Worship.

For the establishment of uniformity in public worship among us on the Lord's day:

I. Let the morning service consist of singing, prayer, the reading of a lesson from the Old Testament, and another from the New, and preaching.

II. Let the afternoon or evening service consist of singing, prayer, the reading of one or two Scripture lessons, and preaching.

III. On the days of administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the reading of the Scripture lessons may be omitted.

IV. In administering the sacraments, and in the burial of the dead, let our form of Ritual invariably be used. Let the Lord's Prayer also be used on all occasions of public worship in concluding the first prayer, the congregation being exhorted to join in its audible repetition. Let a Doxology be sung at the conclusion of

* Discipline, Part I, chap. iii.

each service, and the Apostolic benediction be invariably used in dismissing the congregation.

V. Let the people be earnestly exhorted to take part in the public worship of God—first, in singing; secondly, in prayer, in the scriptural attitude of kneeling, by the repetition of the Lord's Prayer.

VI. Let the Society be met, whenever it is practicable, on the Sabbath day.

The Spirit and Truth of Singing.

To guard against formality in singing:

I. Choose such hymns as are proper for the occasion, and do not sing too much at once; seldom more than four or five verses.

II. Let the tune be suited to the sentiment, and do not suffer the people to sing too slowly.

III. In every Society let due attention be given to the cultivation of sacred music.

IV. Should the Preacher in Charge desire it, let the Quarterly Conference appoint annually a committee of three or more, who, co-operating with him, shall regulate all matters relating to this part of divine worship.

V. As singing is a part of divine worship in which all ought to unite, therefore exhort every person in the congregation to sing, not one in ten only.

Classes and Class-Meetings.

The design of the organization of classes and the appointment of Leaders is,

I. To establish a system of pastoral oversight that shall effectively reach every member of the Church.

II. To establish and keep up a meeting for social and religious worship, for instruction, encouragement, and admonition, that shall be a profitable means of grace to our people.

III. To carry out, unless other measures be adopted, a financial plan for the raising of moneys.

The primary object of distributing the members of the Church into classes is to secure the sub-pastoral oversight made necessary by our itinerant economy. In order to secure this oversight:—

I. Let a report of the condition of his class

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